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A Delay in Watergate Trial Denied

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U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica yesterday rejected an attempt by H.R. Haldeman to put off the Watergate coverup trial until the Supreme Court can rule on the validity of his indictment.

Lawyer for the former White House chief of staff came back into court later in the day with a series of protests over Sirica's arrangements for picking a trial jury.

They also maintained that there was no point to locking up the jury now in light of the summer-long wave of Watergate publicity capped by President Ford's controversial pardon last Sunday of former President Nixon.

The prospective jurors "have already been affected by this news and sequestration will not erase this extraordinary event from their minds," attorney John J. Wilson and three other lawyers for Haldeman contended in their latest petition.

Haldeman had asked Sirica to delay the September 30 trial until the Supreme Court could consider his complaints that a special 1973 law extending the life of the Watergate grand jury was illegal.

Still apparently determined to start the trial on schedule, Sirica refused a postponement in a one-line order saying that he saw no merit to Haldeman's protests over the grand jury's status.

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